govern the working of the universe. Science was ever undergoing modifications, but the principles of art were unaltered by lapse of time. In another course he had entered into some account of the extensive architectural library, which the student should constantly be familiar with. Isocrates had said, "If you mean to be an architect, you will have great need of books." Through the want of a proper knowledge of what was contained in books, there was often the impertinence of calling those things discoveries, which were actually lying under our very noses. By Professor Willis it had been shewn, that the whole theory of the *coupe des pierres* of the Gothic architects—to discover which much labour had been incurred—was all clearly detailed in the work of Philibert de l'Orme. Another instance was in the use of concrete, which had been used by the Romans, and even so late as to have been employed by Sir Christopher Wren. About the time of the death of that great architect, it had been discontinued, and the method of building upon planks had been introduced from Holland, for which country, being employed where they were constantly wet, it might be well adapted; but, on a *moist* soil, the results had taken place which it was now felt to be so necessary to guard against. He then related the anecdote of the contest for a prize for the best poetical work, in which one competitor having decidedly produced the most beautiful poem, the judges were loud in their plaudits, except Aristophanes alone, who was silent, and who, on being asked the reason, produced the work of an author in which the same ideas and language were discovered—thus leading to the prize being conferred upon the competitor who really deserved it.—But he admitted that the multifarious business of the architect presented great difficulties in the full accomplishment of what was desirable.

In noticing the different opportunities for educating himself, now open to the student, as at the two London colleges and elsewhere, and the position of architecture in that academy, where it was united with the grand arts of painting and of sculpture, the lecturer reminded them that beauty was a part of the great scheme of the universe, and should constantly be sought for, along with those indispensible objects, to be provided for in our temples and habitations. Associated, then, as architecture was with the other arts, it became desirable to estimate exactly the advantages derivable from each, and what were to be the objects on which they should concentrate their attention; for, already, if the requirements of Vitruvius were to be insisted upon, it would be impossible to fulfil them: whilst every day, and every moment, had its allotted duty, we must not suffer ourselves to be distracted by pursuits which, however interesting and praiseworthy, are not clearly included in the objects of architectural study.

He then noticed the tendency in architectural drawing to imitate the art of painting, and he characterized it as contrary to sound doctrine and practice. The picturesque had been fatal to architecture in the 17th century; proportion, composition, knowledge of solids, and similar subjects, should occupy all their study, leaving the colours of the rainbow to the painter: pictorial illusion was lost time to them. Two causes had contributed to the circumstances he had referred to, the juxtaposition of architectural drawings and oil-paintings in the exhibition, and the public applause which was accorded to the works of the architectural draughtsman,—but all regrets were ineffectual.

The professor said that rarely had art and science been united in one individual; Wren was almost a solitary instance. Plato had spoken of there being in his time only one architect. Philibert de l'Orme had said that pretty drawings were but nets to catch a customer, and that those who make pretty drawings are those who least understand architecture. On the other hand, of the painter architects,—Scamozzi had said that the architect should have a consummate knowledge of drawing, and he spoke of the art of drawing as "a heavenly gift." Inigo Jones was rather a painter-architect,—Palladio had a better knowledge of construction. After mentioning the aspiring character of architecture [illegible] ably proceeded from the pointed [illegible] that the dome of St. Peter's, at Rome, far from being that of the Pantheon raised in the air, as had been the common assertion, was distinctly traceable from medieval times; he said that when the position of the architect became elevated, pedantry overcame him; instead of "master," he was called "architect," and he then expressed by lines, what, previously, he had shewn by model and direction: since, he had further declined, and sought by ill-drawn lines and much cobalt, to vie with the works of painters. In reference to the importance of both art and science, it might be said, that each might have its own votaries, and the department of taste had, on the whole, been more successful than the mathematical.

He then pointed out some of the subjects in which the architect might be indebted to the landscape painter. Perspective was all in all to the architect, and nothing but companionship with the painter would give him that knowledge of the various points connected with the position of buildings in reference to surrounding scenery, and with their effect when executed. He exhibited a diagram from Möller's work, in which the altered appearance of a lofty building when viewed as a geometrical elevation, and in execution, were strikingly shewn. He recommended studying, by means of drawings on a small scale, the effect of outline, as not less important than that of detail. Vanbrugh, he was quite persuaded, had, with this object, made drawings of his buildings on a small scale; for, when they were approached, great want of correct detail was apparent. The Adams seem to have been the converse of this; with them, outline was disregarded.* He thus considered that the advantages to be derived from association with painters, were purely lineal, and not in colour and polychromy. All the drawings of the great masters, some of which he referred to at Bologna, sent in competition for the church of San Petronio, and which were by Palladio, Vignola, and others, had no colour nor meretricious attempt to seduce the judgment, but rigid outline.

In the decline of art, a different system prevailed; there were paintings in sculpture; perspective was attempted in bas-relief. Raphael had always avoided such errors, so did Vignola and Palladio; but Michaelangelo first sowed the seeds of the decline, which Borromini and Bernini carried out. Vasari's work is full of accounts of the perspective painters of his day.—He also alluded to the scrolls surrounding the tambour of the dome in the church of Sta. Maria della Salute at Venice, as instances of the state of things he had described. Their design was entirely unsuitable for masonry, in which he appeared to think that there should always be a recollection of the method of laying in courses. These scrolls were better adapted for metal work.—He had thus shewn the advantages which the architect could derive from painting and sculpture, and likewise the disadvantages. The architect's use of drawing was to be, in fact, to produce such delineations as a workman could comprehend.—The professor concluded by giving an anecdote related by the Marquis of Northampton, respecting an attendant in his family, shewing the powerful effect which the architecture of the northern cathedrals could produce upon one who entered one of them for the first time.

THE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION.—At this admirably conducted institution, in Regent-street, where sound instruction and amusement are made to go hand in hand, Dr. Ryan has commenced lecturing on the chemical character of vitiated air,—the nature of infection, and the history of remedial agents. The Doctor very properly cautioned his hearers against trusting to any deodorising system, but to strive for perfect ventilation and cleanliness. The works for the new theatre are advancing rapidly. Mr. Thompson, the architect, had recently a very narrow escape. He fell off a scaffold, and was much knocked about, but has now recovered.

* So we understood the professor; but we think some of their works, and, in particular, the drawings preserved in the Soane Museum, would establish the fact, that they were not inattentive to outline, and that, in fact, they adopted the plan of making preliminary sketches on a small scale. In studies of plan, the collection we have alluded to has great interest.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

AN ordinary meeting was held on Monday evening, the 10th inst., Mr. Charles Fowler, V. P., in the chair, when a large number of presents were announced, including drawings of the Town Hall of Morpeth, considered to be by Vanbrugh, from Mr. B. Perry, and a work from M. De Lassaulx, of Coblentz, on the construction of churches, with especial reference to a mode of forming vaults, to avoid the necessity for buttresses, and admit of the use of thin walls. Several members were elected.

Mr. Tite then introduced to the meeting Mr. Layard, whose communications from Nineveh, communicated through Mr. Mair [printed in THE BUILDER], had afforded so much gratification; and he expressed a hope that he would increase this by a personal communication.

Mr. Layard expressed his acknowledgments, and said if matters of interest presented themselves during his travels he would not fail to communicate them to the Institute. He had little to say of the external architecture of Nineveh: scarcely a fragment of the walls remained which would afford a clue. The date of the ruins discovered was still a mystery, but there could be no doubt of their extreme antiquity. He would afford them one proof of it: the earliest buildings in Nineveh were buried, and the earth which had accumulated over them, had been used as a burial place by a nation who lived 700 years before Christ. Probably the buildings dated from 1,200 years before Christ. The rooms were lined with slabs of marble, covered with bas-reliefs, such as those now in the British Museum, which were joined together by double dovetails of iron. The doorways were flanked by winged figures of greater height than the slabs: on all these figures was the mark of blood, as if thrown against them, and allowed to trickle down. The walls were of sun-dried bricks, and where these shewed above the sculptured slabs, up to the ceiling, they were covered with plaster and painted. The beams, where they remained, were found to be of mulberry. That the slabs should have been preserved so long puzzled many. In truth, however, the bricks, being simply dried in the sun, in falling had returned to earth, and had thus buried the tablets and protected them. The buildings, he said, were provided with a complete system of *sewerage*. Each room had a drain connected with a main sewer. Mr. Layard then proceeded to say, that in the midst of the ruins he had discovered a small chamber, formed of bricks *regularly arched*. The dates of these buildings were, as he had said before, lost in obscurity. Certain it was, however, that Nineveh was utterly destroyed 700 years before Christ, and the bas-reliefs sent over by him belonged to an earlier period, because they were, in many cases, found in positions shewing that they had been taken from other buildings and re-used: the sculptured face of the slab, for example, was turned to the wall, and the back re-worked.

Mr. Bonomi expressed surprise at hearing that the cramps were of iron: in Egypt they were all of wood.

Mr. Donaldson (first remarking that the cramps of the Parthenon were of iron) said that Mr. Layard was entitled to their applause for what he had done, especially when it was remembered that most of it had been effected at his own risk and cost, and that he had successfully competed with those investigators who were sent out by the French Government. It was desirable that we should be acquainted with the modes of construction pursued at different periods. Relative to the sun-dried bricks, he should be glad to know if the external face of them were covered with plaster to keep out the wet.

In reply to this and other questions, Mr. Layard said he did not know of any external plastering: the interior colouring was partly enamelled, and displayed human figures as well as decorative ornaments. The chamber of which he had spoken was covered by a perfect arch of bricks, was nearly a semi, and 12 or 14 feet in diamenter. The sewers were not arched.

Before proceeding to the paper of the evening, Mr. P'Anson said he wished to correct a statement made at the last meeting by the present

For a comprehensive guide on OCR and PDF Compression visit our website